(f) whether the proposed Bill would be passed during the current Monsoon Session; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M. P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (g) The issue of bringing up a Central Bill on Agricultural Workers has been under Govt.'s consideration for quite sometime mainly on account of varied perceptions of the State Govts arising out of different agro-climating and diverse socio-economic conditions prevailing in different parts of the country. A draft Bill on the subject drawn up by the Central Govt. was again discussed in the Conference of the State Labour Ministers' held on 07-08 July, 1997. The Conference could not reach any unanimous conclusion on the issue. Government's endeavour is to finalise the Bill and introduce it in the Parliament at the earliest.

Making of the Hepatitis-C Screening Mandatory

*240. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued notification making the Hepatitis-C screening mandatory from 1st of July, 1997;

(b) whether Government had adequate stock of kits for supplying to all the Central, State and other NGOs who are maintaining blood banks in the country before issue of the notification;

(c) if so, the details thereof and its distribution for ensuring the safety of the blood by these agencies, State-wise; and

(d) if not, what further steps Government propose to take in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) The possibility of inclusion of Hepatitis-C testing in blood requires an indepth deliberation among Blood Transfusion Officers, Technologists and Administrators to have a techno-economical analysis and to work out a timeframe before adopting this test as mandatory. Till that time the HCV testing will remain voluntary.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Purchase of Critical Long-Delivery Equipments

1706. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had purchased critical long-delivery equipments, in advance, at a cost of Rs. 1366 crores for the plants for generating 10,000 MW of electricity by 2000 A.D.;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government had placed another order for material worth Rs. 950 crores for the same;

(c) if so, what is the total expenditure, so far, incurred in this behalf; and

(d) whether the proposal has since been abandoned and if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) and (b) Advance procurement of critical and long-delivery items of equipment and components for six 500 MWe Units and four 220 MWe units at a cost of Rs. 1511 crore was authorised by the Government as part of the proposal to install 10,000 MWe of nuclear power generating capacity by 2000 A.D. This was done to